



LINKS PLAYERS DAILY DEVOTIONAL

Links Players

Finishing Strong

So I do not run aimlessly; I do not box as one beating the air. But I discipline my body and keep it under control, lest after preaching to others, I myself should be disqualified. (1 Corinthians 9:26-27).

News of someone being disqualified in golf, either through ignorance or intentional cheating, doesn't happen often. When it does, it makes headlines:

Jordan Spieth Disqualified After Signing for The Wrong Score.

Hideki Matsuyama Disqualified from Memorial for Marking On Club Face.

Mark Hubbard Disqualified from The Houston Open for A 15th Club In His Bag.

Vongtaveelap Disqualified from U.S. Women's Open for Using A Distance Measuring Device.

US Amateur Champion Curtis Luck Disqualified from Korn Ferry Finals After Missing Tee Time.

Does the term "finishing well" feel worn out from overuse to you? I'm a bit surprised that after years of faithful ministry, the Apostle Paul still considered disqualification a possibility. He writes in The Message,

"I don't know about you, but I'm running hard for the finish line. I'm giving it everything I've got. No lazy living for me! I'm staying alert and in top condition. I'm not going to get caught napping, telling everyone else all about it, and then missing out myself."

My desire is to finish my run without adding a massive train wreck to my resume. Paul embraced rigorous spiritual training to ensure that he would complete his race.

On another occasion, Paul borrowed Olympic imagery as he was convinced that he would face severe hardship and imprisonment in the near future. What Paul longed for at this stage of his life was to finish the race! "I consider my life worth nothing to me; my only aim is to finish the race and complete the task the Lord Jesus has given-the task of testifying to the good news of God's grace." (Acts 20:24)

Grace is that aspect of God's character that is wildly generous. He gives and gives and gives. Paul looked ahead to a distant finish line. His goal was to use every ounce of energy, every breath, to tell others of the generosity of God in sending Jesus for us.

Let's face it: many of the races we enter are decidedly less noble. We race to buy more of what we already have too much of, run after approval, or compete for popularity.

Paul desperately wanted people to comprehend the generosity of God that is discovered in Jesus. That was Paul's event, and he longed for the finisher's medal.

Toward the end of his life, Paul wrote from a Roman prison to his colleague Timothy. He believed his time on earth was short. May it be said of us: I have fought the good fight, I have stayed on course and finished the race, and through it all, I have kept the faith. 2 Timothy 4:7

Prayer: Heavenly Father, strengthen me to finish strong for Your glory and for the sake of those I have yet to tell about the good news of Your grace.

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The Links Daily Devotional appears Monday-Friday at linksplayers.com.